JORDAN RIVER PUMPING STATION

Constructed :1902
Address: 7108 West Saratoga Road
Present owner: Board of Canal Presidents

West Jordan miller, Archibald Gardner, who depended on the Jordan River for water power was a long-term advocate of pumping Utah Lake water into the Jordan River's channel. From 1900 to 1901, a period of extreme drought, the river had shrunk to twenty-five percent of its normal flow. James H. Gardner, superintendent of the Lehi Sugar Factory and son of the West Jordan miller, approached Angus M. Cannon, president of one of the Salt Lake County canal companies, and suggested the development of a large pumping station at the mouth of the Jordan River near Saratoga. During a 26 March 1902 joint meeting of the Salt Lake City Council and the Board of Canal Presidents, the body which regulates irrigation matters in the Salt Lake Valley, Cannon presented the idea. After careful consideration the group voted to proceed with construction of such a plant. Bids were awarded to superintendent Gardner and his chief engineer at the sugar factory, M.W. Ingalls.

Construction on *the pumps,* as the station was termed, began on 21 June 1902. By the 19th of August four forty-eight-inch Byron Jackson centrifugal pumps, each capable of delivering four hundred cubic feet of water per second (approximately three thousand gallons), had been installed. During the summer of 1903 the pumps were so successful in increasing the Jordan's flow that a considerable amount of new land was opened for farming in the Salt Lake Valley. In 1905 another pump was added and in 1907 two more were installed. Six years later a sixty-inch pump, with 1,600 gallons per second capacity, was brought on line. When all eight units were in full operation, the plant was delivering seven hundred million gallons of water every twenty-four hours. At the time it was considered to be the largest pumping plant in the world. In 1920 a $185,000 construction project doubled the plant's capacity.

Pumping water is an expensive proposition. When Utah Lake is above its compromise point, the pumps are usually turned off and gravity flow fills the river channel. During 1985-86, as part of a twelve million dollar Utah Lake/Jordan River Flood Management Project, new flood gates southwest of the pumps were installed which improved gravity flow.